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West Virginia Adjutant General's update on RISE West Virginia

CHARLESTON, W.Va. - West Virginia National Guard's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. James Hoyer, issues the following update on the RISE West Virginia program:

This week, crews continued to make progress on 41 homes that are in active construction for the RISE West Virginia program, an increase of nine from last week. Of the 41 homes in construction, 18 are mobile home replacements, 15 are reconstruction projects and seven are in demolition. One home is nearing completion and is ready for final inspection by the West Virginia National Guard Quality Control/Quality Assurance team.

VOAD has issued eight notices to proceed for three rehabilitation and five reconstruction projects. Construction on these projects is expected to begin in the coming weeks.

The 28 additional reconstruction and 13 mobile home replacement cases continue to work their way through the procurement process. There are 295 cases that have been assigned for construction. Once a sub-recipient agreement is signed, West Virginia Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) will take on an additional 20 cases. An additional 30 reconstruction cases will be submitted to the state purchasing office for procurement early next week, bringing the total number of cases awaiting assignment to 43.

Crews continue to work on one bridge this week. Six bridges are complete with 68 others in the case management process at this time.

The 15 reconstruction projects are at various stages in the construction process including debris removal and footers being poured with many that have interior work near completion for

drywall, cabinetry, and trim. Demolition is set to begin or is in progress on numerous other reconstruction projects.

The 18 mobile home replacement projects are also at various stages in the construction process with numerous homes that have completed asbestos abatement and are ready for or have completed demolition, and numerous others that have had block laid, water/septic systems installed, and have moved into electrical/plumbing work phase.

There are 74 other reconstruction and mobile home unit replacement projects at varying points in the initial construction phase, including permitting, inspections and asbestos abatement. Also, 11 other projects are awaiting signed homeowner agreements to move forward in the construction process.

The number of outstanding Housing Program cases is 409, a drop from previous weeks as some applicants have moved out of the program. VOAD case managers diligently assess each case in the program and after three failed attempts to make contact with an applicant, a letter is sent to the applicant with a 30-day window for response. If the applicant does not respond, they are removed from the program. Additional issues such as duplication of benefits may also result in applicants becoming ineligible for the program or dropping out. VOAD maintains an appeals process and applicants who were non-responsive can still re-enter the RISE West Virginia program at any time.

The current breakdown by construction type is as follows: 51 homes are complete, 256 cases require total reconstruction, 47 cases require some form of rehabilitation actions, 99 cases require new mobile home replacement, and nine cases are awaiting initial project type and undergoing the damage assessment process.

Currently, 20 projects are in the asbestos inspection and abatement phase for the Slum and Blight Program. There are an additional 173 projects currently in the Slum and Blight program, 168 of which are ready for the environmental review process. An additional 59 projects are in the case management process pipeline for removal that are considered an “imminent threat” from the county or municipality, meaning those properties pose a threat to the health and safety of the public. These projects will move from the “imminent threat” phase to the environmental review process before demolition can begin. The Slum and Blight program is still accepting applications in all counties affected by the 2016 flood.

Any families who feel they still have any unmet needs or who are looking for an update on their case are urged to contact the new VOAD office over the phone at 304-553-0927 or through email at DisasterRecovery@wv.gov. A hotline is also available for anyone needing to report fraud with regard to the RISE West Virginia program at 1-866-WVWATCH (1-866-989-2824).

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For more information, contact the West Virginia National Guard Public Affairs Office at: (304) 561-6762 or email: holli.r.nelson.mil@mail.mil

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